

problems is to enter the village before first light when most of the people are still in their homes. Once the forces are in the village, interpreters can use a megaphone (from an attached psychological operations team) to call for the inhabitants to leave their houses. The houses and the people are then marked with engineer tape, and the people are led to a central holding area where the plan of searches and interrogations can be explained to the group as a whole. As each house is about to be searched, the occupant can be brought up to observe the search as well as to be observed. At the same time, an interpreter should explain what is happening. Upon completion of the search, the villagers can then be interrogated and segregated into friendly and hostile groups.

These interrogations should be conducted in separate buildings, not in view of the holding area. After questioning, each person should be placed in a separate holding area, again out of view of the initial area. Here, medical aid as well as a hot meal can be offered.

When the interrogations and searches are completed, those suspected of illegal

acts should be evacuated before the rest are released. When this is completed, a final briefing should be conducted by the commander of the search element (through an interpreter, if necessary), or by a host nation representative to the villagers. All actions should once again be explained, along with the reasons for the search.

The reserve force may or may not play a large role in the mission. It serves as a reaction force in case of trouble inside or outside the village. The reserve can help the search element secure the villagers, or it can be released to assist the cordon element.

The keys to the success of a cordon and search operation are much the same as in any other mission, including a thorough mission analysis, proper task organization, strict control measures (inside and outside the objective), good intelligence, precise timing, and rehearsals. Contingency plans have to be carefully considered and prepared. Things that may help a unit convince the civilians include candy, cigarettes, hot food, medical aid, and host nation representatives.

Again, if the mission is to succeed, the inhabitants of the village must be treated with dignity and respect. Religious considerations must be honored; for example, churches and cemeteries should not be damaged or searched without good reason.

The cordon and search mission can go hand in hand with peacekeeping operations or noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs). In today's world, this type of mission is not unusual for a light infantry unit, and the need for such a mission may be just around the corner. Commanders need to be well-briefed by their S-2s on the traditions and beliefs of the area and must have a solid, well-rehearsed plan before they attempt such a mission.

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Company Reconnaissance

CAPTAIN JOHN K. CAROTHERS

I agree with Captain Kevin Dougherty's article, "Leaders Reconnaissance," in *INFANTRY*'s September-October 1993 issue (pages 12-14). Sending the company leaders on a reconnaissance can be detrimental to a mission, and it takes time the leaders could better use in planning and supervision. Still, company level reconnaissance must be done.

Lessons learned from combat operations and training exercises have shown that company leaders often neglect

reconnaissance. The battalion scouts do an adequate job of providing the battalion commander the information necessary to assess his plan, but they do little to help the company commander. Just linking up with the battalion scouts is a tough mission, and I have never believed a battalion scout who points into the darkness and says, "It's right over there, sir." A well-run reconnaissance can confirm or deny the commander's tentative plan. (Yes, the commander

should already have a plan before he starts his reconnaissance and then use that plan to guide his reconnaissance effort.)

After serving as an observer-controller for the 7th Infantry Division's Bold Thrust program, and observing our own battalion at the Joint Readiness Training Center, I actually began to think that "movement to daylight, then fire and maneuver" was an actual form of maneuver. As I approached company

command, I wanted to figure out how to avoid this popular but non-doctrinal form of maneuver.

Thinking back to Ranger School, I could hear the principles of patrolling—reconnaissance, security, planning, and control—still ringing in my ears. I felt secure about planning and control, but the keys to force protection and mission accomplishment lay in reconnaissance and security.

The following is a technique that I have used and can recommend to those of you who command light infantry companies:

Task organize the company's organic 13-man, three-team antiarmor section into a scout section. This organization adds depth and flexibility to battalion operations by freeing the battalion scouts from the task of conducting reconnaissance for the companies. This added depth will help the battalion fill the gap between division reconnaissance and the current battalion reconnaissance area of operations. While this scout organization's main effort is reconnaissance, it retains its role as the company antiarmor asset. If it is organized as described, I believe the company will be better able to fight tanks.

An alternative is to designate a squad in the company or in each platoon to receive additional training on reconnaissance. I have seen this technique used successfully in several units. You may argue that *all* infantry squads should have reconnaissance skills, and if this is the only way you can organize for reconnaissance, fine. But I found drawbacks to this course of action: Most important, I did not want to take the combat power that a squad represented away from my platoon leaders. And I was not sure the average squad and its individual members could accomplish the difficult missions I would give them. Providing additional training for a single squad out of a platoon is harder than it is for a separate element, because the rifle squads have too many other tasks to train on.

My philosophy on light infantry fighting armor also differs from that of some authors. The antiarmor section was designed to fight tanks with the Dragon,

but the Dragon cannot effectively fight a tank. If I am operating in an area where tanks are also operating, I am probably not being employed properly. In the terrain where light infantry should be operating, the most probable threat will be personnel carriers or armored cars, and the AT4 light antiarmor weapon can destroy these.

In short, I did not, in most cases, see myself using Dragons against tanks, and this mission analysis helped me make the decision to use my antiarmor section for reconnaissance. When the company is fighting armor, the antiarmor section will revert to that role, and a squad from one of the platoons will be used for reconnaissance.

The scouts must all volunteer for the unit. The company commander and the



first sergeant must interview and carefully select the best of the company's soldiers. Platoon leaders and platoon sergeants may not like the idea of the commander taking the best soldiers out of their platoons, but the first time their line soldiers walk straight into an objective rally point (ORP) without benefit of a map check and flow right through the assault position into the objective, they will appreciate the need for the best scouts we can train.

Scouts should also be held to stan-

dards above the Army standard. A score of 180 on the Army Physical Fitness Test will not get him through a 20-kilometer infiltration, and the section's four NCOs should be Ranger qualified. The dividends this unit will pay are well worth any negative results from building an elite element in the company.

In airborne and air assault organizations, most units have their antiarmor assets in the platoons in the form of a weapons squad. This squad consists of a staff sergeant who has four soldiers who operate the M60 and M249 machineguns and four who operate the Dragons. I recommend that commanders of these units organize as light infantry does. One day soon, these units should have the Javelin—a more effective antitank weapon. With this system and its range, it will be too much of a task for the weapons squad leader to train, employ, and control both the antiarmor and machinegun assets in the platoon. If you're fighting tanks, you will probably want your antiarmor assets under company control anyway. (I believe that the weapons squad is one of the basic reasons it is difficult to find a machinegunner who understands the art and science of machinegunnery.) Have the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants handle machinegun training and employment. Switching to the light infantry antiarmor section organization will give you a much needed reconnaissance asset and also improve your company's ability to fight tanks.

The executive officer (XO) should lead the reconnaissance section in most cases. I would still require that he and the first sergeant plan and coordinate logistics, but the supply sergeant should execute the plan. In an armor fight, the XO will also command and control the section.

The scout organization can help the company in many other operations:

Designated Marksmen. Combat marksmanship, in my opinion is in terrible shape in most units. (Shooting expert on a qualification range is a far cry from combat marksmanship.) As a company commander, you need soldiers who can shoot and, more important, soldiers who can shoot and are willing to

engage an enemy. Find out who is running a range the next day, and you will probably be able to slide one or two of your soldiers in on his ranges. Get your scout marksmen on a known-distance range two or three times a week, and make them experts with the AN/PVS-4 night sight. They will do miracles for you in operations other than war. A head shot at 100 meters will be great, but center of mass will do. Remember, too, that he will be shooting from behind you while you're talking to some potentially bad guy on a city street.

Air Assault Operations. Use your scouts in the control of helicopters and in setting up pick-up zones. Link them up with the lift and attack unit on post, and get the scouts involved in its training. You may have noticed helicopters flying around at night with no troops in them and no troops on the ground talking to them, and you can help fix this to improve the training of both.

Engineer Operations. How much demolition does it take to blow a door off its hinges or a man-sized hole in a cinder-block wall? How do you make booby traps, put on and take off a mine's anti-handling devices, or construct a double-apron fence? You're not going to get engineers all the time, and your infantrymen need to know how to conduct engineer operations. This training will pay big dividends, especially in your next urban battle. A fellow commander from the engineer battalion who has his soldiers going out the next day to blow demolitions and cut some steel probably won't mind having two or three of your scouts join this training. It usually turns out to be old hat to the sappers, and they will love to show off and instruct your scouts on the use of demolitions. Don't miss these opportunities because of training schedule lock-in rules.

Linguist. Poll your company for language proficiency, and you may be surprised what language skills the soldiers have. Street talk is a language your soldiers may need to know in future operations. Give your scouts some language tapes. A couple of key phrases in several foreign languages may come in handy. Encourage your linguists to enroll in advanced language courses. In

operations other than war, human intelligence is critical, and your linguists will get you the HUMINT you need.

Quartering Party Functions. Use your scouts like the mechanized infantrymen use quartering parties. Kick them out early to help in occupying ORPs, link-up points, and assembly areas.

Security Operations. Your scouts can be armed more heavily and used to conduct counter-reconnaissance or security operations. Many company commanders leave security operations to the battalion in the defense, but this is a big mistake. Use your scouts to kill the enemy reconnaissance and to provide observation of the enemy before he enters your engagement area or sector.

Pathfinder Operations. On many occasions, air assaults are costly undertakings, as I have observed on many landing zones (LZs). As a company commander on company air assaults at night, I had little control over the situation for at least 45 seconds after the helicopters deposited us and departed. With 22 or more combat-loaded soldiers packed into a Black Hawk screaming into an LZ with only six seconds to get off the helicopter, things get confusing. Add to that some incoming small arms and indirect fires, and things really get tense.

The idea is to insert your scout section and XO anywhere from several hours to a day early to secure and mark the LZ. In this mission, the scouts will go heavily armed with M249 machine-guns, M203 grenade launchers, and M4 carbines with AN/PVS-4 sights. Instead of going into an LZ where helicopters are expected, the scouts will insert by fast rope in an area away from the LZ. Their task is to conduct an area reconnaissance of the LZ area. Depending on METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time), they will either destroy, fix, suppress, or report on the enemy in the LZ area.

When the scouts establish communications with the company or battalion, they must be able to talk to and control attack helicopters, close air support, and indirect fires. Just two enemy soldiers with radio and rocket-propelled grenades can ruin your day when you're

on the final approach into an LZ.

Send your scouts over to the long-range surveillance detachment to receive training on tactical satellite communications equipment for long-range communications. For short-range communications, four AN/PRC-126 squad radios and a couple of AN/PRC-77s will do. Your scouts must be expert in field expedient antennas.

Navigation Assistance. Use your scouts to recon and mark routes and guide the company; kick them out early to find the best route to the objective. Use your imagination on how to mark the route, such as infrared chemical lights, fishing line, and the like.

The typical scenario for an attack is receive the mission, do a quick estimate, make a tentative plan, and send the scouts to the objective area under the command of the XO. (They should travel light; METT-T, not unit SOP, should determine uniform. Work with your boss on getting rid of unnecessary gear.) The unit moves to the objective area and conducts the area reconnaissance, pinpoints the objective, and conducts reconnaissance in accordance with the commander's tentative plan. One team will remain at the objective and provide surveillance; the two remaining teams move to the company ORP, and one team establishes the ORP (sand table, platoon deployment) and the other moves back to the company and guides the company to the ORP. After the fragmentary order, the scouts help the unit get to the support by fire, security, assault, and breach locations.

I have offered here a technique for doing reconnaissance and some ideas on how to use your scouts. If you use your imagination, these soldiers can be an asset in many situations. A key point to remember is that they will be taking care of you and your company, so take good care of them.

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